

between the lines

edition three
july 2011



onward and upward for MensLine Australia

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number crunch

No. of received calls
(answered calls + abandoned
calls) since January 1, 2011:

MLA inbound	18 498
MLA call backs	2 128
Suicide Services inbound (SLV and SCBS)	8 347
Suicide Services call backs (SLV and SCBS)	478
<i>beyondblue</i> info line ...	23 692
Veterans Line and ASL ...	2 633

In May, CEO Alyson Miller announced Crisis Support Services has been successful in securing an additional three year contract to provide the MensLine Australia (MLA) service.

The new MLA contract is part of a new support program funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) which aims to focus on quality, collaboration and connecting with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in our community.

While MLA is already placed very well in each of these areas, we will build on these three key elements by emphasising their importance across all the different platforms of the MLA service.

Over the coming months, MLA will make an exciting shift from a service that was predominately a 1300 telephone support line to a truly multi-faceted support service for men, including a 24-hour open line; a call back service (including specific anger management and Arabic services); online text-based counselling and web-based resource centre (including the online forum).

MensLine Australia Program Leader, Randal Newton-John



Randal, Jade and Gerald finally piece together the new roster

explained that MLA was increasing its focus on men who use and experience violence, including developing stronger referral pathways, improving resources on the website and providing support to professionals.

"Providing support to professionals will be a main area of focus for MensLine, especially through our website which will become a primary tool for professionals to access information they can use with, and for their clients", Randal said.

Unfortunately, while basic costs of service provision have continued to rise, the funding for the MLA service remains limited. This has paved the way for a number of changes to the way we work, in order to improve service efficiencies and reduce costs, including a significant reduction in the number of shifts required to manage the

service. Most disappointingly, this will also see a reduction in call numbers due to lack of funding.

To accommodate these changes, the MLA roster was completely reordered with all counselling staff members meeting with Randal, MLA Team Leader Gerald Maloney and HR General Manager Jade MacLeod twice throughout the process. After a lengthy and challenging process, all counsellors have been allocated to a new roster which is set to begin 25 July.

Randal said he was extremely pleased that MLA was able to retain all staff through this process.

"It's a fantastic outcome. A sincere thank you to everyone involved for their patience and cooperation. I'm sure we'll continue to see improvements to the service in the coming months," he said.

CEO's column

Welcome to our third edition of *Between the Lines* and the new financial year. In this edition we look back on some of the major activities of 2010–11, and take a look at the exciting times ahead for CSS, with the commencement of several new service contracts.

We are proud to have secured renewed service contracts to continue to deliver MensLine Australia, Suicide Call Back Service, ATAPS After Hours Suicide Support Service, and the *beyondblue* info line to the community. We are also very excited to welcome aboard new services like Davidson Trahaire Corpsych's After Hours EAP service.

Congratulations must go to Randal Newton-John who after six years with CSS was recently promoted to the role of GM – Commercial. Randal will be responsible for managing all service contracts and will be supporting the introduction of new ways of working to improve the quality and efficiency of what we do. I'm also delighted to welcome Anne Kingston to the team, our new full time clinical supervisor, who will be instrumental in supporting the work and wellbeing of our counselling team.

Finally I'm pleased to share the recent achievement of a major milestone for our staff team – the new CSS Collective Agreement has

officially taken effect after being ratified and approved by Fair Work Australia. I'd like to thank everyone who was involved in its development – an extensive process which resulted in a great outcome for all.

In closing I'd like to extend my best wishes to all of you for a successful 2011–12 year. We look forward to continuing to work together, as we forge new opportunities and partnerships to provide the best possible support services to the Australian community.



Alyson Miller



Alyson Miller
CEO



a word from our callers

"Thank you so much to the *beyondblue* counsellor for sending literature on post natal depression to my parents. Its helped them to understand what my sister is going through. Because it was in Greek, the light bulb really went on for them and now they understand. I'm so grateful. Its really helped our family."

Esthimia, *beyondblue* info line caller

"My team and I refer all our clients to SuicideLine Victoria and the Suicide Call Back Service without reservation. They are both fantastic services and I believe that they are frequently responsible for supporting our clients so well that it actually cuts down on their hospital readmissions quite significantly."

Professional, the Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team

"I'm a psychologist who saw a new client yesterday, a 28-yr-old male in distress, with thoughts of suicide following a relationship breakup on the weekend. He made the tough decision to seek help and called MensLine on Monday. He was just rapt with the support he got. At the end of the call, he was given referrals (including me), had the Medicare rebate explained, and was encouraged enough by the call to contact me and a GP straight away – and fortunately I was able to see him pretty quickly after the GP arranged a mental health plan. This is a young, country man who had never sought

help in any way, and was really anxious about the whole thing. It is fantastic when the courage to take the first step leads to a great response – and to see service providers linking in well together! Well done."

Claire, Psychologist



CSS out and about

The first half of 2011 has been filled with opportunities for CSS to attend events and spread the good word about the important work we do to support those in need.

At the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (VAADA) Conference in Melbourne, Sally Obst (Program Leader – Suicide Services) and Courtney Collier (Marketing and Communication Officer) networked with professionals in the alcohol and drug sector who were pleased to hear more about all of our services, especially SuicideLine Victoria.

Rhona Rees (Marketing Coordinator) made the trip to Sydney to host a trade display at the 2nd International Urban Mental Health Conference. Rhona found the delegates to be keen for information on our vital services.

The Mental Health Community Coalition Conference was held in

Canberra where the key focus was around developing partnerships between government and non-government organisations. Ron Macris (Relationship Manager – Men's Services) and Chris Landy (CSS Counsellor) were able to connect with key ACT mental health agencies and government representatives.

To reach over 1,000 professionals across rural and remote Australia, Randal Newton-John, Christopher Groot and Courtney Collier flew over to the beautiful city of Perth for the 11th National Rural Health Conference.

Delegates learnt more about the Suicide Call Back Service's (SCBS) capacity to provide 24/7 telephone and online support for rural and remote practitioners and communities through Christopher's presentation, while Randal discussed how MensLine Australia (MLA) is working to improve access to



Sally Obst discusses CSS at the VAADA Conference



Rhona Rees and Courtney Collier interact with delegates

support for Australian men. Both presentations generated greater awareness of the services provided by SCBS and MLA.

CSS representatives also travelled around Melbourne, and across the Northern Territory to attend The Grampians Mental Health Conference, Reconnexion - the Annual National Anxiety and Depression Conference,

the 2nd Annual Effective Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Service Delivery Conference and the Royal Australian New Zealand College of Psychiatrists Conference.

Thank you to everyone who made our presence at these events possible. Look out for CSS out and about at other industry events!

New contract to deliver employee assistance program

CSS has secured a new corporate contract to deliver the after-hours Employee Assistance Program (EAP) on behalf of Davidson Trahaire Corpsych (DTC).

CEO Alyson Miller said she was delighted to have secured this contract for the CSS team and have the opportunity to provide this important service.

"Securing new contacts of this nature is a testament to the commitment and hard work of all our staff, and

demonstrates that the quality of our services is increasingly being recognised within both government and corporate sectors," Alyson said.

CSS has commenced taking all after-hours calls received from organisations that use DTC's EAP services. This includes employees of some of Australia's largest government and corporate organisations.

DTC has been providing Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) and related

corporate psychology services since 1988 and is one of the leading providers globally. Services are provided locally, nationally and internationally, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Alyson passed on her congratulations and thanks to all staff involved in securing this contract over the last few months, and said she is delighted that CSS has this new opportunity to work with the corporate sector to support Australians through difficult times.

spotlight on Finance

The CSS Finance team is in the middle of their busiest period of the working year, phasing in the organisation's budget and closing off the 2010–11 financial and payroll year.

Chief Financial Officer, Ann-Maree Smith says the increased workload is not unusual for a finance team at this time of the year.

"March to September are traditionally extremely busy times for us. We don't breathe until after the AGM in October!" Ann-Maree said.

With a team of only three, each staff member has much to keep them busy. Gina Costello and Gagan Sodha make up the team under Ann-Maree's leadership.

Gina holds the position of Senior Finance Officer, primarily responsible for accounts payable and accounts receivable. CSS staff may also know her as the one to go to for cab charges and petty cash. This year, Gina is working with General Managers and Program Leaders to phase in their budgets for the new financial year.

As Finance Officer, Gagan's main function is managing the payroll process and he is now assisting with month end reporting. Both Gina and Gagan are becoming more involved in other functions of the wider finance department, including budgeting and reporting.



CSS finance team – Gina, Gagan and Ann-Maree

Alongside his role at CSS, Gagan is currently completing his CPA and has recently passed the financial reporting module which Ann-Maree described as 'a real buzz' because it is so difficult.

In the current quarter, coordinating the annual external audit will be a big focus for the team alongside phasing in the new budget and closing off the payroll in order to have PAYG summaries to staff by July 14 and annual reporting to the ATO by August 14.

On a regular basis, this busy team do everything from maintaining the fixed asset register, compiling financial progress reports for funders, creating budgets for new contracts or proposals, and generating monthly management reports for every service and department to monitor actual spend against their budget. All of this while ensuring the organisation adheres to Australian accounting standards.

five minutes with Lynette O'Loughlin

Lynette has been Director of Finance on the Board of Crisis Support Services since February 2005.

What is your earliest memory?

We lived in Preston and my dad would walk me to the milk bar on the corner of our street to buy a chocolate bar.

When I was younger I wanted to be...

An air hostess so I could travel to other countries. The travel I achieved, but I was too short to be an air hostess.

Who would you most like to sit next to at a dinner party (person dead or alive)?

Nelson Mandela.

What do you usually serve when you have friends for dinner?

I'm not a gourmet cook but can manage a very nice lasagne with a green salad followed by crème caramels. For family dinners it's usually a pork and/or lamb roast with calamari as an entrée.

What do you enjoy about being on the CSS board of directors?

The opportunity to assist an organisation that believes in its cause and has such committed staff doing a very tough job. Everyone is so professional and friendly it's a pleasure to come to board meetings and other functions.

What has been your most fulfilling moment during your time on the CSS board?

There probably isn't one particular moment but seeing the increase over time in the organisation's reserves so that it now has some financial strength, is quite fulfilling.

What's your favourite Melbourne place to visit?

Westerfolds Park – I love the fact that there's so much natural bushland so close to the city. The Yarra River meanders through it as well and you can also come across kangaroos and koalas.



Lynette O'Loughlin

What are three things you can't live without?

In addition to my husband and three children I can't live without internet banking, chocolate and my mascara.

five minutes with Ignacio Jimenez

Ignacio Jimenez joined CSS in February and is a Clinical Supervisor.

What is your earliest memory?

My earliest memory is of a beautiful summer day. A clean, blue sky of my home town, a smell of dry wheat and hay and the sounds my mother made in the kitchen while preparing breakfast.

When I was younger I wanted to be...

A dancer. Definitely, I wanted to be a dancer. I thought dancing made people happy (I still do) and I did feel very happy when I was dancing or, even better, playing it silly around the house. Singing and playing with everything I could find and annoying my sisters in the process.

Who would you most like to sit next to at a dinner party (person dead or alive)?

If the dinner party was not too noisy I would really love to sit next to the Roman stoic philosopher Seneca. What attracts me to this person is his idea of living a simple life, his interpretation of suffering and how it benefits the soul and how important is to understand our own mortality (probably not the usual talk we have at a dinner party though!).

What do you usually serve when you have friends for dinner?

I love to have friends over for dinner and I love to cook. Socialising over dinner with friends is one of my favourite activities. I tend to imitate traditional, country style Spanish cuisine, plenty of vegies, hearty winter soups and fish.

What do you enjoy about working at CSS?

This is my fourth month at CSS. I enjoy immensely working with the counsellors of all the different programs. It is a privilege to have the opportunity to work with such a team of world class professionals, experienced and knowledgeable colleagues.

What has been your most fulfilling moment during your time at CSS?

The day to day work with the counsellors is very rewarding as it allows me to share their professional journey. Every moment I am able to make a contribution to their work with callers and to their professional growth feels special to me.



Ignacio Jimenez

What's your favourite Melbourne place to visit?

I am very new to Melbourne and there is so much to explore. As I am an architecture lover I would say that my favourite buildings so far are the Gothic Bank, the A.C. Goode House and Federation Square.

What are three things you can't live without?

My partner, my two dogs and a good book.

EBA approved

CSS, the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) Committee and the Australian Services Union are delighted to have ratified the collective agreement for the organisation after many months of negotiations.

The Crisis Support Services Collective Agreement 2011 was approved by Fair Work Australia on May 20 and officially came into effect on Friday May 27, 2011.

CSS General Manager Human Resources and Administration, Jade MacLeod, is confident that after months of hard work

CSS now has a robust, comprehensive and clear agreement which will see the organisation well into the future.

"The new EBA aligns more closely with the health and community sector conditions and ensures CSS can continue to attract and retain quality employees. The agreement boasts a clearly defined classification structure giving staff increased opportunity to progressively move up through the organisation and multi skill on other services," she said.

Overall this EBA has improved staff conditions including increased wages, generous provisions, increased sick leave penalties and compassionate leave, amongst many other improvements.

The final version of the Agreement was put to the vote in April 2011 and 85 per cent of staff covered by the EBA (who chose to vote) supported the agreement.

"This is a very positive result and we are extremely happy that staff can be proud of this new agreement" Jade said.

Committee members at the time of signing the agreement were Jade MacLeod, Ann Beck, Vic Walmsley, John Evans and Susan Doyle-Hosie. Past EBA members include Chris Barrett, David Paterson and Paul Ridgewell.

"Well done to all and congratulations on a fantastic result!" Jade said.

CSS would like to thank all past and present EBA members and the Australian Services Union, especially representative Leon Wiegard for their dedication and hard work during this important process.

best practice clinical supervision at CSS

Having recently welcomed two new permanent practitioners to the clinical supervision team, CSS is in a better position than ever to provide a best practice clinical supervision program to support its counselling team.

In February, Ignacio Jimenez joined the team and is now providing clinical supervision three days a week, and in June CSS welcomed Anne Kingston into a full-time clinical supervision role. Jen Allen continues as a consultant clinical supervisor for Counselling Managers and Counselling Supervisors in order to provide independent, external supervision and avoid any conflict in supervising both counsellors and their immediate counselling manager or supervisor.

Clinical supervision at CSS consists of individual, one-hour, monthly clinical supervision sessions and group reflective practice sessions, also held monthly. During a counsellor's first three months at CSS, the option of fortnightly supervision sessions is available to provide additional support during this transition period.

Clinical supervision provides a formal process of professional support, encouraging self-assessment and learning through reflection. It is a practice-focused professional relationship that enables CSS counsellors to develop knowledge and competence, and to reflect on their clinical work with the support of a skilled supervisor.

Clinical supervision also facilitates the evaluation of a counsellor's interactions with clients to ensure the best quality of care is provided by all CSS services. This support system provides counsellors with an appropriate place to express and explore the wide range of emotional responses they experience in relation to their work. Guiding counsellors in greater self-awareness and self-care can increase their overall well-being and, in turn, the quality of care to clients of the service.

The CSS clinical supervision team also facilitates the group reflective practice sessions where there is less emphasis on individuals and more of a focus on learning from others experiences.

Going forward, the clinical supervision team will look



Ignacio Jimenez and Anne Kingston

at introducing a number of general sessions for reflective practise across the month, rather than the service-specific sessions that are currently held. This will allow greater skill development and learning through the experiences of other counsellors working on other lines while also providing more opportunities for more counsellors to benefit from this resource.

CSS counsellors frequently debrief with the counselling manager or supervisor on duty after calls but they also have the option of debriefing with one of the clinical supervision team. Anne explains that this is keeping with industry best practice.

"CSS is unique in that there are huge opportunities to

receive feedback and support from more experienced practitioners, whether that is the line manager, clinical supervisor or the Quality Assurance team.

"Keeping clinical supervision separate from line management is in line with best practice and ensures that there is no conflict between management and clinical issues. A counselling manager or supervisor could otherwise be challenged to maintain a balance between the growth of the counsellor and the effectiveness of the service," said Anne.

CSS is proud to offer counselling staff a strong clinical supervision program to enhance staff welfare and aide in the provision of quality care for our callers.

be in it to win it

10 double movie passes are up for grabs to a new touching drama called THE BEAVER, opening nationally August 4. Two-time Academy Award winner Jodie Foster directs and co-stars with Mel Gibson in an emotional story about a man on a journey to re-discover his family and re-start his life. Plagued by his own demons, Walter Black was once a successful toy executive and family man who now suffers from

depression. No matter what he tries, Walter can't seem to get himself back on track... until a beaver hand puppet enters his life.

To be in the running tell us in 25 words or less what you think about Between the Lines. Email ccollier@crisissupport.org.au with your response and your contact details by Thursday 28 July. Winners will be chosen at random by Human Resources on Friday 29 July.



ATAPS after-hours support service expands

CSS is pleased to announce the extension and expansion of the ATAPS After Hours Suicide Support Service, for a further year.

In 2008, CSS was awarded the contract to run the ATAPS (Access to Allied Psychological Services) Additional Support for Patients at Risk of Suicide and Self-harm After-Hours Support Service as part of the pilot program operating in 18 divisions of general practice. This new contract will see CSS continue to deliver this innovative service, however now on a national scale.

The Department of Health and Ageing announced the national roll out of ATAPS (including the After-Hours Support Service) across all Divisions of General Practice from July 1.

Chief Executive Officer Alyson Miller explained that continuing our contract to operate the service is a great endorsement from the

Government for CSS and the work we do.

“There is a critical need for a high-quality after-hours support service on a national level. Having been awarded this contract will see CSS continue to fill the gaps in service delivery for those at risk of suicide,” Alyson said.

“A professional, evidence-based, specialist suicide counselling service, such as that provided by CSS for the ATAPS program, is able to transcend barriers to accessing support for those at risk. These barriers include long waiting lists, sparse specialist services on the ground (particularly in regional and remote areas of Australia) and the lack of readily available services that operate out of business hours,” she said.

The first six months of the expansion will focus on making the service known, with a gradual uptake of the service anticipated. Call rates

are not expected to increase significantly in the first 12 months.

The main aim of the project is to support clients who are at risk of self-harm or suicide following a referral from their general practitioner or psychologist, or those who cannot be contacted within 24 hours of their discharge from hospital.

The national ATAPS After-Hours Support Service is a specialised service designed to support psychologists working with people at risk of suicide and self-harm. The service provides clients with access to dedicated professional counselling centred on suicide prevention, outside business hours. The referral aspect of the program is managed by the Divisions of General Practice across Australia, and Crisis Support Services (CSS) operates the telephone counselling component.

our supporters

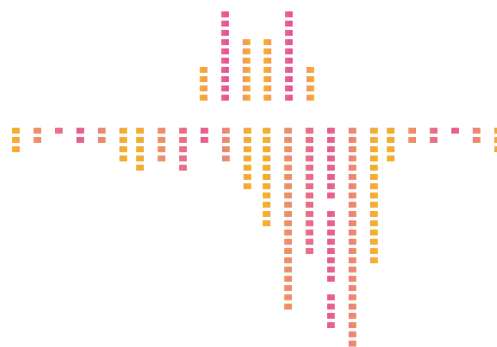


Scanlon Foundation has funded CSS to run a series of tailored training sessions to build capacity in the migrant and refugee sector in Victoria, Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, and Western Australia. This project will provide professional development to employees and volunteers working with migrants and refugees in community based organisations with a

focus on suicide prevention, risk assessment and management. This aims to ensure that some of the most vulnerable members of our community receive the highest quality support for mental health and suicide prevention.

The Miller Foundation continue their long standing relationship with Crisis Support Services, consistently providing funds

essential to the continuation and expansion of our much needed services. This funding includes supporting core infrastructure requirements that are difficult to obtain funding for elsewhere. In recognition of the information technology requirements associated with delivering a 24/7 service, The Miller Foundation funded an Information Technology Support Officer position.



hatches, matches and congrats

Mia McGregor had a bouncing baby boy, Callum Rufus McGregor on 28 April. Mia joined CSS in 2008 as the Team Leader for *beyondblue* and then took on a role as Program Leader – Other Services until May 2010 when she moved on to pursue other interests.



Mia McGregor with baby Callum

Kirsteen (Moss) and Toby are now proud parents of Astrid Beatrice Wonderland Hede, born 24 May, weighing 3.88 kgs.

Congratulations to Alana Roy who is now Medicare-accredited in Mental Health Social Work. When she is not busy working as a CSS counsellor, Alana is starting to



Kirsteen with baby Astrid

build her private practice.

Rhona Rees recently took part in the MS fun run, with her team “Roberta’s Rad Runners” raising \$2170.00 to care for people living with MS and fund research into a cure for the disease. Donations can still be made through the MS Society website.



Carla Neale recently celebrated her 30th Birthday in New York

welcome to the team

A warm welcome to the following staff who joined the organisation between April and July 2011.

Megan Robson
Counsellor

Felicity Martin
Counsellor

Jess Kirwan
Counsellor

Cathy Harper
Counsellor

Joanne Rodriguez
Counsellor

Anne Kingston
Clinical Supervisor

Michelle Rowles
Business Development Officer

what's on

The Staff Connect team ran an Easter Eggstravagana raffle with three great prizes won. Congratulations to Julie McGrath (1st prize), Michelle Verspaget (2nd prize) and Ann Beck (3rd prize). From the sale of raffle tickets, CSS raised \$200 in support of Edgars Mission – a not-for-profit sanctuary for neglected, abused and

discarded farm animals. Founder and Director, Pam Ahern expressed her many thanks for this donation which will go towards providing vet treatments or formula for animals in need.

On May 25 Staff Connect held a scrumptious high tea where staff indulged in fancy biscuits, cakes, pastries, cucumber sandwiches and tea.



Easter prizes



High tea

next edition

Please send ideas for the next edition (September) of Between the Lines to Courtney Collier (ccollier@crisissupport.org.au) or Ellise



Between the Lines editorial team: Courtney Collier and Ellise McLoughlan

McLoughlan (emcloughlan@crisissupport.org.au) by Friday 19th August 2011.



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